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Robin Hall

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for women in the accounting profession?

Education is the most important thing that you can do for yourself but college education does not necessarily determine the road to success. I was not able to complete my college education, but perseverance and a lot of hard work lead me to success. Even though I do not have a degree, I have never stopped learning and not only within my trade but to be a better business owner. Whether you work for someone, or choose to be self-employed, surround yourself with the right people and place yourself in situations that will help build a successful career.

What would you suggest to accounting firms that are interested in retaining and advancing more qualified female staff?

Give your employees every opportunity possible to succeed; challenge employees to perform at the top of their game at all times. Encourage them to work from the premise that the customer drives the success of the business; customers that are delighted with work performed, correctly and on schedule; will be referral machines for your business. Employees should be encouraged to always strive to make this happen; it drives success.

Also encourage employees to never stop learning. They can learn from each other, from clients, and from educators. Attain and retain certifications applicable in their field of expertise whenever possible. Meet and maintain friendships with others in your field; they can be life-long resources.

Why did you choose to work in – and stay in – the accounting field?

I have always been comfortable with numbers; I instinctively understand them. Early on I worked for a couple of different companies doing payroll, AR, AP, and such. This kind of work came naturally to me. Having gained knowledge and experience in the field, I found that there were many people in the business world that were very

good at what they did; making things, selling things, fixing things, but they had very

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Dubner, The Oz Principal by Roger Connors, Tom Smith and Craig Hickman.

What changes do you foresee in the accounting profession of the near future (3-5 years)?

Cloud services and mobile devices will continue to be at the forefront of technological advances; data analysis and business intelligence tools are being used by many more companies than just a few years ago; QBO will continue to become more versatile; automated data entry will push CPA's into consulting roles in greater numbers; social media will continue to march forward; websites to act as portals will be important.

How do you see yourself participating in shaping the future of the accounting profession?

As more data and companies move to the cloud, having information at clients' fingertips is of the utmost importance. Business owners need to be able to get to the accounting and other analytics that drive their business.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped shape the direction or focus of your professional life.

Early on in building VARC Solutions, I had a client that also doubled as a mentor. He challenged me to do new things and really helped me grow to be fearless to try new things. He encouraged me and taught me lessons on selling my services. He actually told me that my prices were too low and really broke down for me the value of services, which is essentially time, and altered my way of thinking from being a W2 employee to a contractor and a business offering a service. He was one of my first clients and almost 20 years later he has become a client once again.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

“Take care of the client.”

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worked to the clients' benefit ten-fold. My team is willing to do things at night or on the weekends if needed if they know that when it comes up, they are able to be off for an appointment at the doctor or a kid's school play.

[See the other recipients of the 2016 Most Powerful Women in Accounting award.](#)

Accounting

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